

Subcommittee on Columbus Division of Police Hiring Practices

“Having a department that reflects the community it serves helps to build community trust and confidence, offers operational advantages, improves understanding and responsiveness, and reduces perceptions of bias.”

2007 report issued by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, *A Symbol of Fairness and Neutrality: Policing Diverse Communities in the 21st Century*

The Chief of Police must demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion by creating a clearly defined vision establishing a culture of trust, respect and value for employee strengths. The plan to attract, increase and retain diverse candidates is created when strong CPD leadership and community involvement works together. Once the hiring practices are reviewed and improved, CPD leadership must be accountable to their recruitment and hiring plan with measurable goals. Strategies to increase diversity must be incorporated into the long-term strategic plan. Leadership's commitment to diversity should consistently appear throughout written documentation, its mission statements, policies, and recruiting material. Our subcommittee's definition of diversity broadly includes the acceptance of race, ethnicity, gender, age, language skills, culture, religion or belief system, and sexual orientation.

Presently there is the opportunity to hire an individual to the position of Chief. On April 23, 2019, Mayor Ginther stressed that he wants the next police chief to be a “change agent” to focus on police-community relations and expand diversity in the division. We recommend the successful candidate for Chief have prior experience creating metrics measuring improvement, progress and demonstrating success in increasing hiring, mentoring and promoting a diverse workforce.

Persons assigned to recruitment require training in applicable federal and state laws, maintain impeccable ethical standards, and stay focused on the mission of marketing

CPD to the community while seeking potential applicants. In addition to needing the knowledge of CPD's personnel recruitment goals, staff working in the recruitment unit need to understand and be included in the development and pursuit of the overall City strategic plan specific to diversity and inclusion.

The unit requires a realistic budget to accomplish this mission. Additional training requirements for recruiting staff include public speaking, marketing and sales, time management, web site management, selection process and the rules and laws governing recruitment, selection, and employment. Civilian employees can complement officers in order to increase staffing resources. For purposes of diversity recruitment, recruitment staff need to be recognized as the Division's subject matter experts for recruiting, CPD's diversity goals, and its progress toward those goals.

Outside of the Recruitment Unit, Division employees must recognize their commitment to be recruitment ambassadors for CPD.

The Hiring Committee compared the size of police departments and recruitment divisions within cities of comparable population size to the City of Columbus. The cities below represent cities comparable to Columbus. The data was obtained from publicly available documentation and information provided by the departments via telephone. Information not listed was unavailable to subcommittee review.

City	Population	Police Personnel	Civilian Personnel	Total Personnel	Recruitment Officers
Baltimore	611,648			3,100	
Charlotte	856,062	1,972	520	2492	15
Denver	619,968	1,518	319	1837	
Indianapolis	872,680	1,700	250	1,950	4
Austin	950,715	2,646			20
San Francisco	884,363	1,869			

Recruitment advertisements included in the marketing strategy need to reflect the values, ideals, and objectives of CPD and reinforce the dedication to community partnerships. A marketing strategy inclusive of public service oriented policing may attract a more diverse pool of applicants.

Presentations to the Community Safety Commission this past year described the role of the police officer as crime fighter, service provider, mental health worker, with a commitment to community wellness. The officer must possess the necessary emotional intelligence to deal with critical incidents and tragedies. Ultimately, when the situation arises, officers must have the wisdom and judgement to apply only that level of force that is reasonably necessary to stop a criminal act. Presentations included the transition of police officers from the warrior to the guardian. We agree with that desired result. Recruiting a candidate drawn to public service may broaden the interests of individuals applying to the position of police officer who are more guardian focused. Highlights of service in the Division may create the culture that endorses accountability and a career to perform community policing.

Community collaboration can help attract and identify recruits who want or may have an interest in a career in law enforcement. Combining CPD personnel and community members to form a Division diversity committee may provide a venue for community partnership, increase the community's sense of positive ownership of the police department and increase trust. Community input and assistance to define the qualities desired in CPD officers may help recruiting efforts. Additional collaborative efforts can be

enhanced as committee members act as recruitment advisors and potentially be trained as volunteer recruiters to assist the small number of officers presently assigned to CPD recruitment.

Beyond the obvious benefit of community engagement and collaboration, inviting community members to participate in the selection process strengthens CPD's community relationships and allows community members to provide input regarding neighborhood needs during the selection process.

The oral review board may be a step in the selection process to include city residents. The purpose of the oral review board (Step 7 of the selection process) is to address concerns resulting from the applicant's background investigation and/or polygraph and discuss job-related questions. Oral review board members evaluate and decide if the applicant can be offered a conditional appointment if they successfully complete the OPOTC physical fitness test. The oral review board is an opportunity for the applicant to discuss and present additional information to address questions the board members may have that may or may not be a barrier to a conditional appointment. A diverse oral review board inclusive of community representation may help the board as a whole recognize the different ways individuals communicate in body language and subtle conversational cues. Community members can highlight diverse skill sets, family circumstances, education, prior work experience, language proficiencies, cultural exposure, family history, and talents that are necessary for the community-oriented police officer. Building trust in this manner could validate CPD's commitment to the importance of selecting the right candidates to become police officers. It also demonstrates to the candidate the importance of the community's voice to CPD early on in his or her career.

CPD should ensure that oral review board members are well trained, demonstrate competencies for the position and apply the same standards to evaluate all candidates. We recognize that candidate specific questioning is necessary to address concerns that surfaced during the background investigation. Oral review board members should be briefed on interview etiquette, protocol and objective questioning to reduce the perception that the board is an interrogation process. A representative from Human Resources was added to participate in the oral review board and ensures the integrity of the process. This is a positive change.

A critique of the selection process discussed with commissioners involved screening out of those who exhibit a deficiency (either cognitive, behavioral, or psychological) that suggests a candidate is inappropriate or unqualified. The applicant's perception is that the consideration for hire is a multiple uphill process in which failure to overcome a step may disqualify a candidate from further consideration with no feedback or reasoning to the applicant when not recommended to the next step in the selection process.

Incorporating a case management model highlighting the individual applicant by monitoring each step in the process is highly recommended. Applicant disqualification

points should be identified and meticulously scrutinized to ensure that exclusion decisions are based on failure to meet essential selection standards. The monitoring begins at the point of initial interest and continues until an applicant completes the Academy and field officer training. This highlights that recruitment and selection does not end until an officer has completed his or her probationary employment period satisfactorily.

Research suggested the following community partners and initiatives may attract viable candidates meeting minimum standards:

1. Women- and minority-owned businesses, grocery stores, health clubs, neighborhood council meetings, YWCAs, schools, and universities especially criminal justice programs, career fairs, and sporting events and promoting maternity uniforms;
2. Partner with Columbus City Schools (CCS) to create courses for high school students interested in careers in law enforcement;
3. Religious leaders can arrange for police officers to visit places of worship to talk to youth groups about law enforcement careers and consider the accommodation of religious required attire;
4. Community activists, advocacy groups and social service organizations can coordinate presentations about CPD's diversity goals at community centers in predominantly nonwhite neighborhoods;
5. CPD leadership awareness of the labor market to know when local employers are going to lay off workers and schedule recruitment discussions;
6. Advertise in movie theaters;
7. Partner with local electronics stores and request them to show CPD's recruitment video on their display televisions;
8. Partner with gyms and spas;
9. Regularly meet with Homeowner Associations and neighborhood watch block leaders;
10. Media outreach should involve the chief appearing as part of a diverse community panel discussing police recruitment goals. Such meetings provide another opportunity to increase awareness of the police recruitment problems and how they affect the agency and the community, and provide another means for soliciting assistance from the community to resolve the problem;
11. Develop a web page devoted to age, language skills, culture, religion or belief system, sexual orientation, and women in policing that highlights the existing diversity of officers and their achievements
12. Promote incentive pay for bilingual officers;
13. Primary and Secondary Schools to include guidance counselors, teachers, and school administrators as CPD ambassadors who can share concerns and opinions of students with police officers. They can invite police officers to participate in school assemblies and classroom events;
14. Youth Organizations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts can be another step to Explorers and/or Cadets.

15. Establish and foster a partnership with the Columbus State Community College Justice, Safety, and Legal Studies department to assist with the recruitment and engagement of candidates

Points of Subcommittee recommendations highlight the following:

General

- In addition to the Chief, ownership and accountability of the entire hiring and training process assigned to a Deputy Chief
 - Accountability for diversity outcomes
 - Recruitment, hiring, training, professional standards report through a single reporting structure/deputy chief
 - Quota/goal for diversity tied to a performance evaluation and reported in annual report
 - Women, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+
 - Track and report recruitment contacts, recruits entering process, and enter academy
- Director of Diversity & Inclusion reporting to the Mayor's Office/Public Safety Director
- Establish a case management process to assign applicants to a specific point of contact who remains consistent throughout each step
- Independent audit of recruiting/testing process included in annual report
- Establish a budget that realistically addresses the resources and needs for Recruitment Unit personnel and related resource costs
- Remove all Civil Service Human Resource responsibilities from the Police Department Administrative Subdivision and placed in the general City Human Resources Division

Recruitment

- Recruiting and community engagement should be full time positions without other patrol or Division obligations
- Civilian liaisons within recruiting unit to new American, LGBTQI+ and minority communities
- Recruiting materials available in multiple languages
 - Recruiting incentive to include underrepresented minorities including LGBTQI+ with an intentional effort to recruit successful candidates
- Connecting official and recognized pipeline for CPD recruitment and Explorer's program with CSU or other CTE programs
- Co-recruiting/referral to civilian jobs if not yet of age or fitness level

- Bench marking size of recruiting staff/resources against similar sized cities. A few candidates of cities between 600k and 1.25 million in population: Baltimore, Charlotte, Denver, Indianapolis, Austin, Dallas
- Residency incentive program
 - Ex. Atlanta – home down payment assistance program partnership between police department, police foundation and land bank
- Referral based incentive program for city residents and underrepresented minorities
 - Candidates invested in the community by living in the areas in which they patrol and understand the demographics may have the essential quality necessary for a genuine community relations culture

Testing

- Bonus points for successful alumni of Explorers & cadet programs and current civilian City employees
- Points for additional language fluency/competency/skill set on testing
- Preferential points on COPE for successful completion of prior training programs
- Cultural competency training for those scoring COPE
- Add trained community members to the COPE panel
- COPE scenarios designed to bring out problematic bias
- Manager over background investigations, polygraph testing and oral boards should be required to obtain polygraph training/certification

Topics to further explore

- Conduct a departmental cultural assessment and evaluation and formalized plan to address assessment outcomes
- Mentors through training academy and first 3 years of service, especially for women, minorities and LGBTQ
- Recommend training committee investigate implicit bias training.
- One civil service test a year makes it hard to keep recruits in the process. Can this be shortened/expedited? Can a civil service test be offered twice a year? What does this do to the testing/hiring/background process?
- Problematic practices in polygraph - i.e. examiners saying they detect deception when they don't

- Some applicants provided feedback that they felt the oral review board was subjective and felt like an interrogation because of the length of time it took to question some applicants.
- Assess the knowledge, skills and impartiality members to create an inclusive and diverse oral review board
- Subjectively applying qualifiers, primarily in background, check to some candidates and not others
- Lack of feedback available to candidates when not successfully selected
- Selection process for which background investigations are conducted first
- Process for putting candidates "on hold"
- Uniform standards to allow head covering
- Review current citizen requirement
- Move all EEO/Sexual Harassment complaints from Internal Affairs to the City of Columbus EEO office

Topics to consider presented in the Public Forums

- Random and mandatory drug testing of an officer involved in a use of force incident resulting in an injury that requires on site medical treatment and/or transport to a medical facility as well as a vehicular crash/collision while on duty
- Establish an independent civilian review board. We understand this recommendation to be extremely complex and requires time to research, benchmark and review by the City of Columbus elected officials, leadership of Public Safety, the Chief of Police and FOP leadership. Progress on the pursuit of this recommendation is to be reported in the CDP annual report. A diverse work group comprised of internal and external stakeholders should be established within a year of the installation of the permanent Chief of Police.
- Establish a Division of Compliance and Ethics

The Hiring Subcommittee met 12 times. The following professionals accepted invitations to discuss their respective areas with committee members:

Bell, Napoleon: FCSO Outreach and Engagement

Blunt, Richard: Public Safety Manager: Background Investigations Section

Delong, Amy: Executive Director, Civil Service Commission

Dieringer, Jennifer K.: Human Resources Analyst

Gresson, Dale A.: Chairperson Justice, Safety and Legal Studies Columbus State Community College

Hare, Daniel: Assistance Professor, Criminal Justice Columbus State Community College

Schrader, Joseph: Commander

Sistrunk, Randall: formally Mayor's Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Smith-Hughes, Chris: Sergeant, Recruiting Unit

Stewart, Bob: Assistant Director of Public Safety

Stonerock, Randy: Division of Police Polygraph Unit

Wilson, Anthony Sr: Director of Safety and Security Columbus Metropolitan Library

Resource Information

- Ghose,Dave. "The Columbus Police Chief Problem." *Columbus Monthly*, Columbus Monthly, 23 Apr. 2019, www.columbusmonthly.com/news/20190423/columbus-Police-chief-problem.
Police-chief-problem.
- COPS Office. 2015. *President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Implementation Guide: Moving from Recommendations to Action*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- COPS Office. 2009. *Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Policing Services.
- Lum, C., Koper, C.S., Gill, C., Hibdon, J., Telep, C. & Robinson, L. (2016). *An Evidence-Assessment of the Recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing — Implementation and Research Priorities*. Fairfax, VA: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy,
George Mason University. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police.

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